

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9626

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 6293

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 18 SYRIAN MEDIA REVIEW

1. SPET 18 AL-THAWRAH HEADLINED: " PRESIDENT ASAD MEETS WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS UPON HIS ARRIVAL IN DAMASCUS. CHTAURA TALKS TO CONTINUE TOMORROW MIDST OPTIMISM FOR REACHING FINAL ACCORD".

2. PRESS REPORTED THAT "SUPREME QUADRIpartite SYRIAN/ARAB LEAGUE COMMITTEE" MET IN CHTAURA SEPT 17 FROM 10:30 TO 16:30. ACCORDING TO AL-THAWRAH REPORTER, DAMASCUS ACCORD OF JULY 29 WAS ADOPTED IN LETTER AND SPIRIT AS BASIS OF CHTAURA TALKS. HE ATTRIBUTED POSITIVE RESULTS OF CHTAURA MEETING TO SYRIA'S "UNCEASING EFFORTS AND CLEAR PRINCIPLED STAND".

3. PRESS GAVE PROMINENCE TO STATEMENT BY SYRIAN

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DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER JAMIL FOLLOWING TALKS IN WHICH

HE SAID: "THE MEETING WAS POSITIVE AND WILL LEAD TO STOPPING THE FIGHTING. SYRIA IS PLEASED WITH THIS MEETING. SYRIA HAS WORKED AND WILL CONTINUE TO WORK FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE CONFERENCE... WE HAVE NO DESIGNS IN LEBANON EXCEPT TO STOP THE FIGHTING, WHICH ALSO MEANS ENDING THE PLOT".

4. PRESS CONFERENCE OF AL REP AL-KHOLI WAS ALSO CARRIED IN FULL. AL-KHOLI EMPHASIZED ATMOSPHERE OF FRANKNESS AND CLARITY WHICH PREVAILED DURING TALKS. HE SAID LEBANESE PROBLEM IN ALL ITS DIMENSIONS, HISTORICAL, LOCAL, ARAB, AND INTERNATIONAL HAD BEEN PRESENTED. SINCE SARKIS WAS VISITING CAIRO SATURDAY, TALKS WOULD BE RESUMED ON SUNDAY NOON, SEPT. 19. HE SAID IMPLEMENTATION OF JULY 29 DAMASCUS ACCORD WAS PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF DISCUSSION AND EXPECTED FINAL ACCORD TO BE REACHED INCLUDING TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION. MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION WAS TO MAINTAIN PEACE, AND TOWARD THIS END THERE SHOULD BE SATISFACTORY GUARANTEES FOR ALL PARTIES, AND COMPREHENSIVE RATHER THAN PARTIAL SOLUTIONS.

5. AL-THAWRAH CORRESPONDENT AT CHTAURA INTERVIEWED FATAH SECURITY CHIEF ABU HASSAN SALAMAH WHO STATED THAT SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN RELATIONS WERE STRATEGIC IN NATURE AND THEIR RESTORATION BASED ON COMMON VIEW OF FUTURE WAS ESSENTIAL. EVENTS IN LEBANON, HE ADDED, HAD HARMED NATIONAL SECURITY OF ENTIRE ARAB NATION.

6. PRESIDENTS ASAD AND SARKIS MET FOR THREE HOURS EVENING SEPT 17. ACCORDING TO PRESS, TWO PRESIDENTS CARRIED OUT COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF ALL ASPECTS OF LEBANESE SITUATION INCLUDING POSITIONS OF VARIOUS PARTIES, RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, AND RESULTS OF CURRENT CONTACTS. NECESSITY OF CONTINUING EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN PEACE IN LEBANON IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT ITS COMPLETE NORMALIZATION AND PERMIT IT TO PLAY ITS PROPER "CULTURAL AND ARAB ROLES" WAS STRESSED.

7. AL-THAWRAH ARTICLE ON RENEWAL OF SADAT'S PRESIDENCY COMMENTED: "ACCORDING TO OBSERVERS, THERE WAS NO UNCLASSIFIED

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DIFFICULTY FOR THE SADATI REGIME BY DISTORTING FACTS AND PRESENTING THE SINAI AGREEMENT BETWEEN IT AND THE ZIONIST ENEMY IN FAVORABLE LIGHT TO THE EGYPTIAN PEOPLE, TO FALSIFY ELECTION RETURNS". SECOND ARTICLE STATED THAT "THE SHAM REFERENDUM WAS BOYCOTTED BY NATIONALIST AND POPULAR FORCES IN EGYPT". DAMASCUS MORNING RADIO BROADCAST SEPT 18 ALSO ATTACKED REFERENDUM STATING, "THE WIDESPREAD CAMPAIGN OF ARRESTS AND TORTURE

LAUNCHED BY THE EGYPTIAN SECURITY DEPARTMENTS BEFORE
AND AFTER THE SHAM REFERENDUM HAS GENERATED A STRONG
FEELING OF OPPRESSION AND SUPPRESSION AMONG THE PEOPLE".
MURPHY

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